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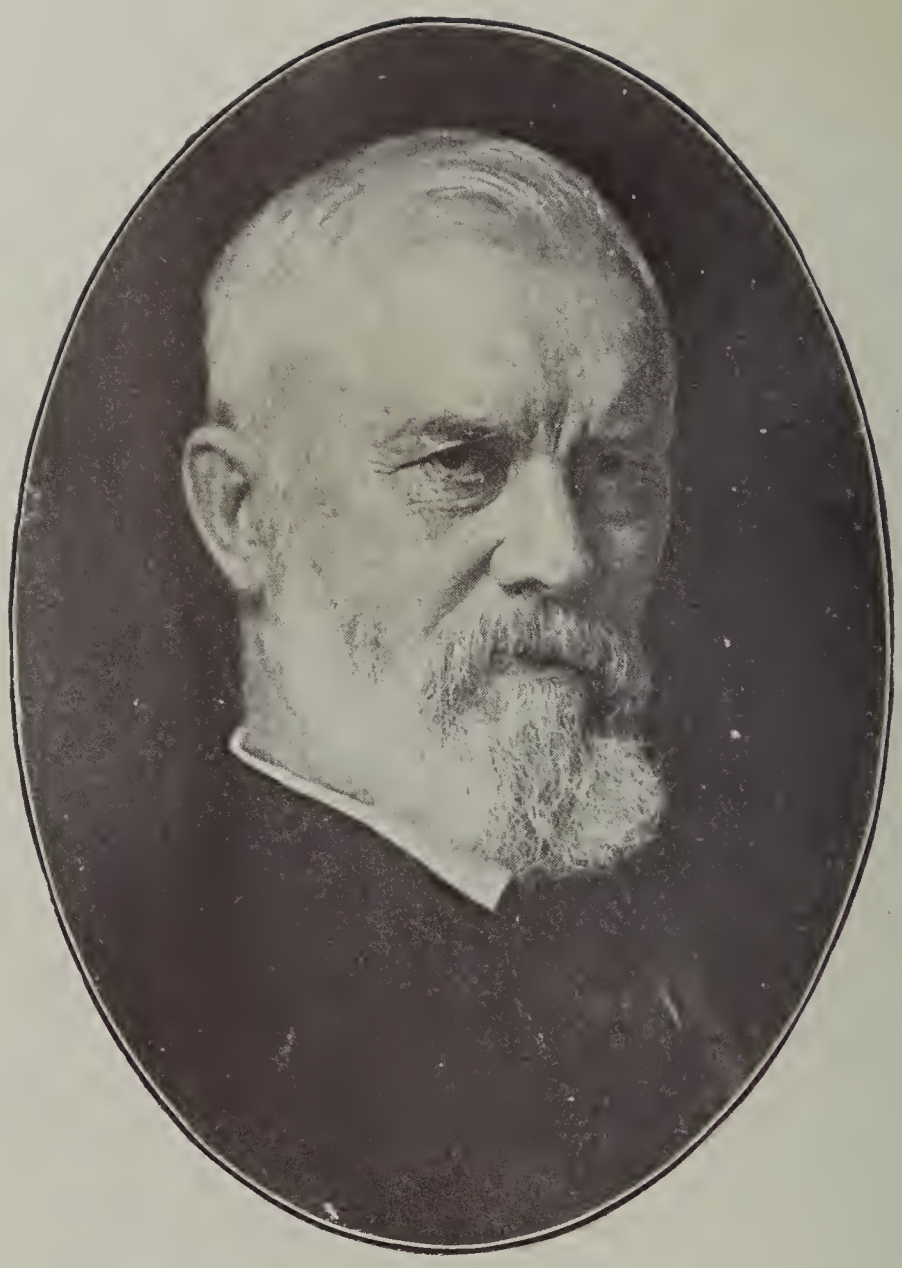
Illinois Historical Survey

CANADIAN FOLK-LORE SOCIETY

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT



TORONTO
PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY
1911



David Boyle.

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THE CANADIAN FOLK-LORE SOCIETY

The objects of the Canadian Folk-Lore Society are the promotion of interest in the study of folk-lore in all its branches, and the collection, preservation, and publication of thé folk-lore and mythology of Canada —

(1) of the various Indian tribes ;

(2) of the Eskimo ;

(3) of the native-born Canadians of English, Scotch, Irish, Welsh, French, or German extraction ;

(4) of the thousands of foreigners, of many nationalities, who annually come to this country ;

(5) of the descendants of Negro refugees from the United States.

The Society hopes, as soon as funds permit, to publish an annual volume of transactions or even a quarterly journal.

Persons who take a practical and active interest in the objects of the Society are eligible for election as Active Members, the annual fee being $1.00. The number of Active Members is limited to one hundred. Any one desirous of being associated with the Society and co-operating in its work may become an Associate Member (number limited to one hundred), the fee for which is $1.00 per annum. All applications for membership shall be sent to the General Secretary.

The Society's year is from October 1 to March 31, during which period monthly meetings are held for the reading of papers, etc. The Annual Meeting, for the transaction of business and election of officers, is held in the month of April of each year.

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Active and Associate

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Banks Miss, University College, Toronto.

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Brereton, Mrs. R. L., 25 Admiral Rd., Toronto.

Burwash, Rev. N., D.D., LL.D., F.F.S.C., Chancellor, Victoria College, Toronto.

Carstairs, J. S., B.A., 345 Crawford St, Toronto.

Caswell, E. S., Public Library, Toronto.

Clawson, W. H., M.A., Ph.D., Lecturer in English, University College, Toronto.

Coyne, James H., M.A., LL.D., F.R.S.C., St. Thomas, Ont.

Durand, Miss Laura B., 237 Huron St., Toronto.

Eakins, W. Geo., M.A., Librarian, Osgoode Hall, Toronto.

Falconbridge, Sir Glenholme, 80 Isabella St., Toronto.

Forster, J. W. L., Manning Arcade, Toronto.

Fraser, Alexander, M.A., F.G.S.C., F.F.S.C., etc., Provincial Archivist, Parliament Buildings, Toronto.

Fraser, C. Gordon, 10 Sylvan Ave., Toronto.

Fraser, John, Petrolea, Ont.

Hicks, R. W., 59 Wilson Ave., Toronto.

Hill-Tout, Charles, F.A.E.S., Abbottsford, B.C.

Huard, L'Abbé V. A., A.M., 2 Port Dauphin St., Quebec.

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Macdonald, C. E., 12 Richmond St., (Room 403), Toronto.

Macdonell, Miss Blanche L., Alexandra Apartments, Toronto.

McCallum, Miss J. J., 13 Bloor St., W., Toronto.

McLean, W. A., C.E., Public Works Department, Parliament Buildings, Toronto.

McPherson, Donald M., 1034 Denman St., Vancouver, B.C.

Merrill, Miss Helen M., 4 Prince Arthur Avenue, Toronto.

Morison, Professor John Life, M.A., Queen's University, Kingston, Ont.

Oliver, Edward T., 86 Garden Ave., Toronto.

Read, Edgar, c/o E. R. C. Clarkson & Sons, Ontario Bank Chambers, Toronto.

Reed, A. T., Owen Sound, Ont.

Robertson, John, 294 Avenue Rd., Toronto.

Robertson, Neil M., 294 Avenue Rd., Toronto.

Rumble, Isaac A., B.A., 77 Charles St., W., Toronto.

Smythe, A. E. S., *The World*, Toronto.

Spiers, H., 631 Church St., Toronto.

Storey, Miss C. M., 200 Beverley St., Toronto.

Thompson, Mrs. E. J., 43A The Alexandra, Toronto.

Tilson, F., 631 Church St., Toronto.

Tyrrell, J. B., M.A., F.G.S., 534 Confederation Life Building, Toronto.

Walker, Sir Edmund B., C.V.O., F.R.S.C., etc., 99 St. George St., Toronto.

Waugh, F. W., Acton Publishing Co., Toronto.

Wintemberg, W. J., F.F.S.C., 50 Isabella St., Toronto.

Yeigh, Frank, Dept. Lands and Forests, Parliament Buildings, Toronto.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

BEFORE giving the history of the organization of our Society I would like to touch briefly on what had already been done in folk-lore research in Canada long before the present Society came into existence. Valuable work had, of course, been accomplished by ethnologists in the course of their investigations among our Indians and Eskimos, and in this connection we need only mention such well-known workers as Dr. Franz Boas, Dr. A. F. Chamberlain, Dr. David Boyle, Mr. C. Hill-Tout, and Father Morice. The first work of a purely folk-lore character was perhaps that of Emile Petitot, whose *Traditions Indiennes du Canada Nord-Ouest* appeared at Alençon in 1887. Another important contribution to the literature of aboriginal folk-lore was the Rev. S. T. Rand's *Legends of the Micmacs*, which is a good example of what can be done in collecting the legends of even a single tribe.

Aside from what has been accomplished in the aboriginal field, a considerable amount of work has been done among our French-Canadians, chief among the workers being the late Dr. Louis Fréchette.[1] Among others who have made collections of French-Canadian folk-lore are Miss Blanche Macdonell,[2] Edward Farrer,[3] and Sir James Lemoine; the latter giving the result of some of his researches in his book on *The Legends of the St. Lawrence*. In the department of folk-song we have that admirable collection of *chansons* by Gagnon.

Here in Ontario no great effort was made to collect our folk-lore until 1897, when Dr. Boyle, through the medium of the Toronto *Daily Globe*, brought together valuable material from all

[1] See his "French-Canadian Folk-Lore," in the *Canadian Magazine*, vol. 30, pp. 18–22, 119–120, 215–216, 329–331, 415–416, and 530–532.

[2] "Superstitions of the French-Canadians" (*Popular Science Monthly*, xliv., 1894, pp. 520–525).

[3] "The Folk-Lore of Lower Canada" (*Atlantic Monthly*, (Boston, 1882), xlix., pp. 542–550).

parts of the Province and the Dominion as well.[4] Since then some interest has been aroused in the subject and some work has been done, especially among German-Canadians.[5]

The first successful attempt to organize a folk-lore society was made in 1892, at Montreal, as a branch of the American Folk-Lore Society. This society, which lasted about six years, had a large membership and accomplished some useful work, and many interesting papers were read at its meetings. The late Professor D. P. Penhallow of McGill University, Mr. John Reade, Dr. Fréchette, Dr. Robert Bell, Dr. S. E. Dawson, Miss Macdonell, Hon. H. Beaugrand, Mr. W. J. White, Dr. Le May, and Dr. Kingsford were some of the leading members.

After the untimely demise of this society no effort was made to organize another in Canada until several years ago, when Dr. Boyle was urged by some U. S. authorities to form a branch of the American Society here, but this effort met with discouraging results. It was not until the spring of 1908 that attention was again directed to the need for such an organization, through the press, but the result was equally discouraging. The project was then abandoned until July of the same year, when organization of the present society was effected.

Meetings of the Society.

Session 1909–1910.

In 1908 a detailed programme of work was sketched, and a constitution and by-laws were drafted. At one of these meetings (on July 6) fellowships were conferred on Dr. David Boyle, Chancellor Burwash, Alexander Fraser, and the General Secretary of the Society.

[4] "Canadian Folk-Lore," November 13, 1897, to March 19, 1898.

[5] See articles in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, vols. xii. (pp. 45–50), xix. (pp. 241–244), xx. (pp. 213–215); also in *Papers and Records of the Ontario Historical Society*, vol. iii., pp. 86–96.

A more extended bibliography of the aboriginal and general folk-lore of Canada and Newfoundland is in the course of preparation by the Secretary, which, it is hoped, will facilitate the work of our students of folk-lore, and which may be published by the Society.

During this year we issued a circular calling attention to the objects of the Society. These were sent to ethnologists, historians, and others in Canada, and the responses were encouraging, adding the names of several prominent workers to our membership roll.

On the evening of September 21, we had the pleasure of having with us the well-known folk-lorist Mr. E. Sidney Hartland, F.S.A., of Gloucester, England, who was returning from the Winnipeg meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Mr. Hartland lectured on the customs grouped round the carnival and Shrove-tide. His address illustrated the methods by which the folk-lorist identifies surviving customs with ancient religious ceremonies and beliefs. He pointed out that the study of folk-lore had driven out the erroneous philological ideas on sun myths held by a certain group of mythologists of the last century. The lecturer doubted whether Canada had yet evolved anything which might be regarded as folk-lore nationally. He urged the necessity of collecting the existing material brought in by immigrants to this land; one of the objects of our Society being to discover in how far their beliefs were affected by their new environment and by aboriginal folk-lore. It was gratifying to see the large attendance at this lecture; in fact the lecture hall in Victoria College, chosen for the meeting, had to be abandoned for a larger apartment.

At the Inaugural Meeting in Victoria College, on October 9, Mr. Alexander Fraser, the President, spoke of the practical work the Society could accomplish in a field almost unoccupied by others. He laid emphasis on the fact that the purpose of the Society was the serious and earnest one of collecting and recording the folk-lore of the many races mingling in Canada, and making it valuable for succeeding generations as well as the present one. Our Honorary Patron, Chancellor Burwash of Victoria College, then treated the two questions, "What is folk-lore?" and "Why should we have Canadian Folk-lore Societies?" In beginning the speaker said that the work before the Society was not easy or of such a nature as appealed to the great mass of the public.

The literary part of the programme was provided by Mrs. Scott-Raff and Mr. R. S. Pigott. The former recited an Indian legend and Mr. Pigott sang "The Lament of Hiawatha."

The next meeting of the Society was held on November 28. An interesting paper on "Folk-lore in North America" was read by Miss Laura B. Durand, which showed evidence of wide reading and familiarity with the subject. At the conclusion a number of interesting legends were recited by Mrs. Scott-Raff.

On December 17 Mr. F. W. Waugh read a paper on "Canadian Ghost Lore," which was very interesting. He gave a large number of ghost stories, and also dealt fully with French-Canadian traditions of corpse-candles, *feu-follets*, bale-fires, etc. The paper aroused considerable discussion in which the President, Professor Keyes, Miss Merrill, Mr. Smythe, and others took part.

At the January meeting, which was held on the evening of the 27th, the Secretary read a paper on "The Gift of Invisibility — a study in Folk-lore." The paper showed how universal was the popular faith in the power to make one's self invisible through magical means. An attempt was made to trace the origin of certain ideas connected with the belief; such as, for instance, the caps, helmets, and cloaks of invisibility which figure so prominently in many folk-tales and in classic story. These, he said, most probably found their origin in the concealing effect of such natural phenomena as mists and clouds, which later came to be regarded as actual caps or enveloping cloaks, and the retention of such names as mist caps and cloud cloaks, and the fact that the ancients said the helmet of Pluto was an impervious cloud, were cited as evidence in support of this view. Other portions of the paper were devoted to the discussion of other phases of the subject — the use of spells and incantations, animal and vegetable substances, rings and precious stones, etc. The paper was followed by an interesting discussion.

On February 25 we had a symposium on folk-lore, in which the President and Miss L. B. Durand took part. Mr. Fraser spoke on the comparison between myths and legends, and Miss Durand read some interesting examples of children's play rhymes

which she had collected. Miss Durand has placed her collection of material at the disposal of the Society. These rhymes were collected through the Young People's Department of *The Globe*. The collection is by no means exhaustive, and much may still be done, especially among our foreigners.

The last meeting of the session was held on April 28. The paper for the evening, "The Literary Merit of the Popular Ballad," was given by Dr. W. H. Clawson, lecturer in English at the University of Toronto. In the absence of the President and Vice-Presidents, Professor Keys was asked to take the chair, and, in introducing Dr. Clawson, said he might be described as the literary grandson of Professor Francis Child, the great ballad authority, as he had studied under Professor Kittredge, a pupil of Professor Child, and himself a specialist in this field. Dr. Clawson's paper proved to be a most able and interesting treatment of the subject. Before entering upon the discussion of his theme Dr. Clawson spoke briefly on the origin of ballads, and stated that he held to the theory of Professor Gummere that they were of communal origin. In the treatment of the general subject he gave examples of each class of ballad and analyzed the typical specimens. The striking merits of the old folk ballads were, he said, the reticence, economy of effort, genuine spontaneity, and impersonality. The lecturer also, in the course of his paper, commented on some of the elements of folk-lore interest occurring in some of the ballads. The chairman and others took part in the discussion. Several of the speakers referred to Canada as being a good field for the collection of ballad variants, a work which is being vigorously prosecuted by some members of the American society.

Looking back over what has been done during the past session we may well feel encouraged to aspire to greater things during future sessions. Our membership, while not large, includes the names of several from whom we may expect good work. The great needs of the Society are funds, working members, and

plenty of energy and enthusiasm. Canada, we know, is a young country, and we can not expect to find many who are interested in our work; and, unfortunately, those who are interested, have already too much to do.

I need not tell you what a large field we have in Canada, and even here in the city of Toronto there is a wealth of material at our very doors; but the need exists for immediate action if we are to preserve what is still obtainable, for education is gradually destroying the material.

It is proposed to form a folk-lore library in connection with our Society, and we have already received a copy of *Tom Tit Tot, an Essay on Savage Philosophy in Folk-Tale*, which the author, Mr. Edward Clodd, a prominent member of the English Folk-Lore Society and a well-known writer on folk-lore subjects, has kindly presented.

We are indebted to the courtesy of the Victoria College authorities for the privilege of holding our meetings in the College during this session.

W. J. Wintemberg,
General Secretary.

February 25, 1911.

TREASURER'S STATEMENT

1909–1910

Receipts

Annual Fees	$ 22.00	
Interest at Bank to date	26	
	Total ———	$ 22.26

Expenditures

Printing 400 Letter Heads	2.75	
" 500 Folder Circulars	4.75	
" 400 Receipts (in pads)	2.25	
General Secretary — Postage, etc.	5.30	
Assistant Secretary "	3.00	
Treasurer "	38	
	Total ———	$ 18.43
Balance in Bank		3.83

Miss J. J. McCallum,
Treasurer.

Toronto, November 30, 1910.

Audited and found correct, April 22, 1911.

(Signed) W. Geo. Eakins, *Auditor*,

DAVID BOYLE, LL.D., F.F.S.C.

DAVID BOYLE, the well known Canadian archæologist and Honorary President of this Society, who died February 14, 1911, aged sixty-nine years, was born in Greenock, Renfrewshire, Scotland, in 1842, and came to Canada in 1856. He served his apprenticeship as a blacksmith, but afterwards became a school teacher, and was for ten years principal of the Elora public school. His attention was early directed to the study of geology and archæology, and while in Elora he founded a museum in connection with the school of which he was principal. Leaving Elora, he came to Toronto, and here he was instrumental in founding the archæological museum of the Canadian Institute, presenting his collection as a nucleus and it was mainly through his efforts that we now have in this city one of the finest archæological collections on the continent. Dr. Boyle for many years held the office of curator of the Canadian Institute, but after the removal of the archæological collection to the Education Department, he became the Provincial Archæologist and Superintendent of the Provincial Museum.

Dr. Boyle was an accomplished ethnologist, and was considered one of the best archæologists on the continent. In 1900 he attended the Bradford meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. He was a member of the Association's Committee on an Ethnological Survey of Canada for many years. He also represented the Province at the International Congress of Americanists which met in New York in 1902, and in 1906 he was chosen vice-president of the Quebec meeting of the Congress. In 1908 the "Cornplanter" medal was conferred upon him by the Cayuga, N. Y., Historical

Society, for Iroquois research. It had been conferred only twice before — upon General John S. Clark and Rev. Dr. W. M. Beauchamp. One of his greatest honors came in 1909, when the University of Toronto conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Laws. He was made a Fellow of our Society the same year.

He was a member of the following societies : the Ontario Historical Society (of which he was the efficient secretary for nine years), the American Anthropological Association, the Champlain Society, the Archæological Institute of America, corresponding member of the Anthropological Institute of Gt. Britain and Ireland, and of the Society of Anthropology, Ethnology and Comparative Psychology of Italy.

His works of a more or less folk-lore content are as follows :

His Archæological Reports, issued since 1886, contain considerable matter of interest to the folk-lorist. The report for 1898, in which appeared his researches on the pagan Iroquois of Ontario, is of especial interest.

Notes on Primitive Man in Ontario, Toronto, 1895.

"On the Paganism of the Civilized Iroquois of Ontario," in the *Transactions of the Anthropological Institute* (London, 1900), xxx., pp. 263–273 ; also in *Ontario Archæological Report*, 1901, pp. 115–125.

"The Philosophy of Folk-Lore" (*Archæological Report*, 1901, pp. 125–131).

Dr. Boyle some years ago also edited a department of Canadian Folk-lore in *The Globe*, and succeeded in bringing together considerable valuable material, which only remains to be sifted and properly classified to enhance its scientific value.

W. J. W.